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MEDIA RELEASE

Ethical Clothing Australia Week shines a light on the people behind Australia's textile, clothing and footwear industry

Ethical Clothing Australia is bringing workers, accredited businesses, unions and industry advocates together across the country to highlight the skilled workers behind every garment, uniform, and piece of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) made in Australia.

Ethical Clothing Australia Week 2026 highlights that *All clothing is handmade*. The theme reminds Australians that every textile, clothing and footwear product relies on human skill, labour, and quality control at every stage of production. Behind every finished item is a person, and often many people, whose work makes local manufacturing possible.

Running from 10 to 20 September, the week includes a mix of in-person events and online webinars that celebrate workers, promote Ethical Clothing Australia accreditation, and increase awareness of ethical Australian manufacturing.

In Victoria, *Voices Behind The Seams* will take place on Thursday 10 September at Collingwood Yards. The event is a live storytelling evening, giving audiences a chance to hear directly from workers and outworkers, accredited businesses and industry representatives.

In Brisbane *Made by Queensland* will take place on Friday 18 September at the Convention & Exhibition Centre. The event will be a panel discussion, highlighting the strengths, capabilities and ongoing developments within Queensland's textile, clothing and footwear industry.

Interim National Manager Angela Bell says the 2026 program highlights the breadth of roles involved in making clothing in Australia and the importance of protecting workers throughout the supply chain.

"All clothing is handmade. Someone designs it, develops the pattern, cuts the fabric, sews it, adds trims or prints, checks the quality and prepares it for dispatch," she says.

"Machines may help along the way, but they do not replace the skilled workers whose hands and knowledge bring a product into being."

"We want Australians to look twice at where their clothing comes from and to recognise the businesses that treat workers as an asset rather than a cost."

Bell says Ethical Clothing Australia's accreditation program continues to play a critical role in protecting workers and supporting ethical local manufacturing.

"Our work helps workers receive their legal entitlements and work in safe conditions. In one year - the TCF Union completed more than 1,200 compliance audits through the accreditation program and resolved more than 3,300 breaches across the supply chain. These audits also helped return almost \$800,000 in unpaid wages, superannuation and workers' compensation to workers."



In addition to state-based events, Ethical Clothing Australia will deliver six national webinars during the week, featuring accredited businesses, workers, manufacturers and industry experts.

A number of accredited businesses are also hosting their own events, where attendees will get the opportunity to participate in a range of activities including designing their own tea towel or attending a factory tour. These events extend the reach of the program and create more opportunities to celebrate local workers.

“Businesses that choose accreditation are making a tangible difference for workers and we are glad they are playing an active role in ECA week and helping to create a fairer and more ethical industry.”

ENDS

Visit Ethical Clothing Australia’s website to find out more about all events taking place during Ethical Clothing Australia Week: <https://ethicalclothingaustralia.org.au/ecaweek/>

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About Ethical Clothing Australia: Ethical Clothing Australia is an accreditation body that works collaboratively with businesses to protect the rights of Australian textile, clothing and footwear workers. The accreditation program maps a business’s local supply chain and ensures that Australian workers are being paid appropriately and receiving their legal entitlements.

In person events

Voices behind the seams

Thu, 10 Sep, 6:30pm - 8:30pm AEST
Collingwood, Victoria

Made by Queensland

Fri, 18 Sep, 10am - 12pm AEST
South Brisbane, Queensland

Online events

The Considered Wardrobe: A Practical Styling Session

Mon, 14 Sep, 2pm - 3pm AEST

Dressing with Intention: Consciously Connecting with Your Clothes

Mon, 14 Sep, 6pm - 6:40pm AEST

The Ethical Buy: A Panel Discussion on the Benefits of Ethical Procurement

Tue, 15 Sep, 1pm - 2pm AEST

Stitched With Purpose: A Panel Discussion on Social Enterprise and Purpose-Led Fashion

Wed, 16 Sep, 2pm - 3pm AEST

Made Out Here: A Conversation on Ethical Fashion Beyond the Capitals

Wed, 16 Sep, 6pm - 7pm AEST



Stitching Your Future: An Information Session on Careers in Ethical Fashion and Textile Manufacturing

Thu, 17 Sep, 2pm - 3pm AEST